Engaging boys and men for gender equality: improving the lives of women and girls
Feeling heard may provide an opening to learning about non-violent and more equitable ways of relationships. Through both individual- and group-counselling, safe spaces are created for men to share their experiences of violence and to challenge harmful gender and social norms. MenCare+ trains counsellors to work with men who have used violence in their intimate partner relationships. Through role-play, guides, and hands-on activities, participants are encouraged to challenge their gender roles and to practice positive social behaviour in their families and communities.

**COUNSELLING MEN ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE**

MenCare+ has established community campaigns to increase awareness of men's roles in fatherhood and caregiving and to promote more diverse images of manhood. These campaigns use role-models, such as community and religious leaders and local celebrities and share the stories of various men with different perspectives on masculinity.

**ENGAGING WITH THE HEALTH SECTOR**

MenCare+ also engages with the health sector by collaborating with ministries of health, SRHR and MCH services. For these manuals to be incorporated into public policy, therefore ensuring sustainability and greater reach.

**Supportive Relationships**

MenCare+ is effective in improving respect and understanding between the sexes. Men who use violence in their intimate relationships should be dealt with their partners and communicated with by counselling them to adopt such interventions and to ensure sustainability. The programme targets policymakers to advocate for policies that engage men in SRHR and fatherhood.

**Involving Communities**

MenCare+ is effective in engaging and respecting and understanding the sexes. Men who use violence in their relationships should be dealt with their partners and communicated with by counselling them to adopt such interventions and to have policies that will be incorporated into public policy, therefore ensuring sustainability and greater reach.

**Gender Equality**

MenCare+ is effective in supporting men become involved and responsible husbands and fathers. After receiving training, health workers are increasingly encouraging husbands to be involved in prenatal care and delivery, instead of waiting outside the clinic because of embarrassment or fear of not being able to take care of their new baby. By changing the gender norms and stereotypes, MenCare+ stimulates the debate on gender equality among men, women, and their families and communities. And in changing national policies. Programme participants talk about gender equality, would open up when talking about fatherhood and men's involvement in childcare, and to improve relational well-being of women and men, including preventing intimate partner violence.

**EduCAtion: ChAnGeInG SoCial AND gEnDeR NORMS**

MenCare+ provides group education that strives to change social and gender norms for men. MenCare+ uses workshops and materials which combine focus groups, MenCare+ has conducted research on both the federal, state, and local levels, and has established evidence on how men can be engaged in gender equality.

**tARGet GroUpS**

- Young men - to address male behaviours that influence SRHR outcomes, such as increasing the use of contraceptives and encouraging health-seeking behaviour among men;
- Fathers and other family members - to improve equitable involvement of men in maternal and child health and in childcare, and to improve relational well-being of women and men, including preventing intimate partner violence;
- Community members - to increase awareness and create an enabling environment for engaging men in SRHR and MCH and for preventing intimate partner violence;
- Policy-makers - to advocate for policies that engage men in SRHR and MCH.

**TARGET GROUPS**

- Policy-makers – to advocate for policies that engage men in SRHR and MCH.
- Community members – to increase awareness and create an enabling environment for engaging men in SRHR and MCH.
- Fathers and their partners – to improve equitable involvement of men in maternal and child health and in childcare, and to improve relational well-being of women and men, including preventing intimate partner violence.
- Health workers – to stress the importance of engaging men in sexual and reproductive health and SRHR services.
- Community members – to increase awareness and create an enabling environment for engaging men in SRHR and MCH.
- Policy-makers – to advocate for policies that engage men in SRHR and MCH.

**Involving Policy-Makers**

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**invOlvE d FaThErHOOD**

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MENCARE CAMPAIGN

The MenCare+ programme is engaging men in gender equality in its four implementing countries. This is part of the Global Fatherhood campaign, coordinated by Promundo-US and Sonke Gender Justice. Since the global MenCare campaign launched in 2011, more than 35 countries around the world have made the campaign their own.

The Global MenCare campaign has reached millions of individuals and changed the lives of people around the world. The campaign has successfully leveraged international interest at a time when the issue of men working for gender equality has gained unprecedented prominence. In most countries where it has been established, the MenCare campaign has contributed to national policy debates and/or influenced specific policies related to men, fatherhood and caregiving.

www.men-care.org
www.facebook.com/mencarecampaign
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MenCare+ is an innovative, three-year, four-country collaboration between Rutgers and Promundo-US, working with long-term national and regional partners with extensive local knowledge and expertise. In Brazil, Indonesia, Rwanda and South Africa a range of strategies are being implemented to engage boys and men in social change and as caregiving partners in order to improve the health and lives of women, children and men, to prevent intimate partner violence and to build respectful relationships.

The MenCare+ programme is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of girls and women are critically hindered by rigid gender and cultural norms. Women often lack decision-making power and are at greater risk of HIV infection and intimate partner violence. Men have a crucial role to play in enhancing the SRHR of women and girls.

Fatherhood offers an opportunity to reach young and adult men with a new perspective on manhood. When men become more involved and supportive as fathers and partners, intimate relationships improve and violence decreases, women’s rights advance, and children have better development outcomes. Research shows that men’s involvement as caregivers also enhances their own quality of life.

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